

STARS AND STRIPES

Friday, August 1, 2003

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

Iraqi AF planes found buried

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Some of Iraq's missing air force has turned up down below.

Search teams, some hunting for Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction, found dozens of fighter jets from Iraq's air force buried beneath the sands, U.S. officials say.

At least one Cold War-era MiG-25 interceptor was found when searchers saw the tops of its twin tail fins poking up from the sands, said one Pentagon official familiar with the hunt. He said search teams have found several MiG-25s and Su-25 ground attack jets buried at al-Taqqadum air field west of Baghdad.

Iraq's air squadrons were a no-show during the war, and U.S. military officials supposed their pilots stayed grounded because they believed they were overmatched by American and British air power.

Various officials differed in

opinion as to whether the buried aircraft could ever fly again. Many of the planes were buried intact with minimal efforts to protect them from the sand.

Rep. Porter Goss, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said the discovery pointed to how far Iraqi forces went to conceal their activities. The Florida Republican was briefed on the discovery during his recent trip to Iraq.

"Our guys have found 30-something brand new aircraft buried in the sand to deny us access to them," Goss said.

He said the planes were not considered weapons of mass destruction for which coalition troops have been searching for months, "but they are weapons [Iraq] tried to hide."

Prewar intelligence estimates from earlier this year said Saddam Hussein's regime had about 300 combat aircraft, all of them survivors of the Persian Gulf War. Most were aging Soviet-era MiGs,



AP

An Iraqi air force SU 25 fighter jet wrapped in plastic sits buried in the sands of the deserted Tamous air base Friday.

Sukhois and older French Mirage fighters. The best are MiG-29 Fulcrums, one of the most advanced fighters produced in the Soviet era.

Allied warplanes bombed several planes on the ground, and U.S. Air Force officials say no Iraqi planes were detected flying a combat mission during the war.

Australian troops, who on April 16 captured the Al Asad Airfield, 112 miles northwest of Baghdad, found scores of fighter aircraft, mostly Soviet-era MiGs but also three advanced MiG-25 Foxbats, the fastest combat aircraft today. Helicopters, radar systems and millions of pounds of explosives also were found.

Taped 'Saddam' says he will forgive looters

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — An audiotape broadcast Friday purporting to be from Saddam Hussein issued a new call to arms against American forces, while U.S. soldiers raided two houses in Tikrit, capturing two men said to be "important associates" of the deposed dictator.

The speaker on the tape, which was aired by the Arab satellite channel Al-Jazeera, said the former leader will "at any moment" defeat the

American occupation forces and return to power.

The tape also said looters of government property should not worry about retribution from Saddam and instead should join the guerrilla war.

The voice on the tape sounded like Saddam, but its authenticity could not immediately be confirmed. The speaker said the recording was done Sunday.

Later Friday, soldiers from the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division swept into two houses in Tikrit, Saddam's home-

town, at about 4 p.m. while the two men napped in the midday heat. No shots were fired.

The military refused to identify the pair but said their arrests came during a continuing search for the fugitive former Iraqi dictator.

Military sources further north in the city of Mosul said Americans now were focusing on a band of Iraq stretching from the Tigris River to the Syrian border between Tikrit and Mosul.

The audiotape, the fourth

allegedly from Saddam to be broadcast in just over two weeks, appeared to be an attempt to rally more Iraqis to the guerrilla war being fought against American troops by assuring people they had nothing to fear upon Saddam's promised return to power.

On Thursday, four days after the tape allegedly was recorded, Saddam's daughters Raghda and Rana, whose husbands were executed on Saddam's orders in 1996, were granted refuge in Jordan with their nine children.

Son accused, a father with 'no other choice'

Villagers demand Iraqi kill son they believe worked as informer for U.S. forces

BY ANTHONY SHADID

The Washington Post

THULUYA, Iraq

Two hours before the dawn call to prayer, in a village still shrouded in silence, Sabah Kerbul's executioners arrived. His father carried an AK-47 assault rifle, as did his brother. And with barely a word spoken, they led the man accused by the village of working as an informer for the Americans behind a house girded with fig trees, vineyards and orange groves.

His father raised his rifle and aimed it at his oldest son.

"Sabah didn't try to escape," said Abdullah Ali, a village resident. "He knew he was facing his fate."

The story of what followed is based on interviews with Kerbul's father, brother and five other villagers who said witnesses told them about the events. One shot tore through Kerbul's leg, another his torso, the villagers said. He fell to the ground still breathing, his blood soaking the parched land near the banks of the Tigris River, they said. His father could go no further, and according to some accounts, he collapsed. His other son then fired three times, the villagers said, at least once at his brother's head.

Kerbul, a tall, husky 28-year-old, died.

"It wasn't an easy thing to kill him," his brother Salah said.

In his simple home of cement and cinder blocks, the father, Sabah Salem, recalled a warning from village residents earlier this month. He insisted his son was not an informer, but he said his protests meant little to a village seething with anger. He recalled their threat was clear: Either he kill his son, or villagers would resort to tribal justice and kill the rest of his family in retaliation for Kerbul's role in a U.S. military operation in the village in June, in which four people were killed.

"I have the heart of a father, and he's my son," Salem said. "Even the prophet Abraham didn't have to kill his son."

"There was no other choice," he whispered.

In the simmering guerrilla war fought along the Tigris, U.S. officials say they have received a deluge of tips from informants. Acting on the intelligence, soldiers have uncovered sur-

face-to-air missiles, 45,000 sticks of dynamite and caches of small arms and explosives. They have ferreted out lieutenants and bodyguards of the fallen Iraqi president, who has eluded a relentless, four-month manhunt.

But a shadowy response has followed. U.S. officials and residents say informers have been killed, shot and attacked with grenades. U.S. officials say they have no numbers on deaths, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the campaign is widespread in a region long a source of support for Saddam's government. U.S. officials not say whether Kerbul was an informer.

The U.S. military says bluntly it does not have the means to safeguard those providing intelligence. "We're not pro-

"I have the heart of a father, and he's my son. Even the prophet Abraham didn't have to kill his son. There was no other choice."

Sabah Salem Kerbul

viding any kind of protection at the local level," said Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the U.S. military commander in Iraq.

U.S. military officials attribute most of their tips to good will, either out of an informant's desire to eliminate the vestiges of Saddam's rule that are unpopular even in the Sunni Muslim-dominated north, or to end attacks that have unsettled a region still reeling from the government's fall.

Maj. Josslyn Aberle, a spokeswoman for the 4th Infantry Division, which is based in Saddam's home town of Tikrit, said only a "very small percentage receive money" and that the U.S. military vets intelligence before acting on it.

In Saddam's government, informers were encouraged, paid and protected by the intelligence services, a crucial but despised means of control in 35 years of Baath Party rule. Some residents contend today that at least some people in the new batch of informers — those willing to defy mounting threats — have charged protection fees or sold their

services as perceived intermediaries with U.S. forces.

Residents of Thuluya said they had no doubt about Kerbul. After the operation in the village, dubbed Peninsula Strike, a force of 4,000 soldiers rounded up 400 residents and detained them at an air base seven miles north. An informer dressed in desert camouflage with a bag over his head had fingered at least 15 prisoners as they sat under a sweltering sun, their hands bound with plastic. Villagers said they soon recognized his yellow sandals and right thumb, which had been severed above the joint in an accident.

"We started yelling and shouting, 'That's Sabah! That's Sabah!'" said Mohammed Abu Dhua, who was held at the base for seven days and whose brother died of a heart attack during the operation. "We asked his father, 'Why is Sabah doing these things?'"

In the raid, three men and a 15-year-old boy were killed, all believed by villagers to have been innocent. Within days, many focused their ire on Kerbul, who had served a year in prison for impersonating a government official and was believed to have worked as an informer after he was released.

Kerbul's family said U.S. forces took him to Tikrit, then three weeks later, he went to stay with relatives across the Tigris in the village of Alim. As soon as word of his release spread, his brother Salah and uncle Suleiman went there to bring him back.

"We sent a message to his family," said Ali, a retired colonel whose brother was among those killed during the operation. "You have to kill your son. If you don't kill him, we will act against your family."

His father appealed, Ali recalled, saying he needed permission from U.S. forces.

"We told him we're not responsible for this," Ali said. "We told him you must kill your son."

Kerbul's body was buried hours after the shooting, his father said, carried to the cemetery in a white Toyota pickup. He said he and Kerbul's brother accompanied the corpse. Salah, his son who fired the fatal shots, said he stayed home.

Neither U.S. military officials in Thuluya nor Tikrit said they were aware of the killing.

"It's justice," said Abu Dhua, sitting at his home near a bend in the Tigris. "In my opinion, he deserves worse than death."

Envoys press leader to leave Liberia

The Associated Press

MONROVIA, Liberia — Top West African government ministers opened their mission Friday to press Liberia's embattled warlord-turned-president to cede power as promised, traveling into his bloodied capital even as new fighting erupted, killing at least 12 civilians, including four children.

President Charles Taylor evaded the top-level delegation — sending a message to ministers of Ghana, Togo and Nigeria at his nation's main airport that he would meet with them only on Saturday.

The Liberian leader had gone to the country's southeastern front at Buchanan, they were told — a trip that would mark Taylor's first known journey outside Monrovia since rebels began laying siege to the capital in June.

Taylor's alleged sudden trip delayed delivery of the message the top officials car-

ried with them, from Taylor's fellow West African heads of state: Taylor must leave power by Thursday, three days after the first West African peacekeeping troops are scheduled deployment for his war-devastated country.

The demand, issued at a summit Thursday, "was very clear in its plain meaning: We will put in the troops on Monday. We expect him to be able to leave within three days," Mohamed Ibn Chambas, executive-secretary of West Africa's leaders' bloc, told *The Associated Press*.

Chambas cited Taylor's own pledges to yield power, made repeatedly since rebels launched their offensives on Liberia's capital in June.

"He had made public undertakings, and that's what the leaders of the region expect him to do," Chambas said.

Taylor's nonappearance heightened tensions in the capital — sparking rumors that the Liberian leader had left the country.

Liberia's military and Taylor's spokesman denied it.

Fighting surged, ending a one-day lull that had accompanied arrival of a 10-member advance team for the long-promised deployment.

At midmorning, a volley sent mortar rounds slamming into a poor neighborhood of tin-roof houses. The attack killed five adults and four children. Residents hauled the bloodied bodies out of the house, piling them in the road.

Another blast in the same area killed three adults, including a pregnant woman.

Families fled back into hiding places. Militia fighters ran into the streets, AK-47s at the ready.

Fighting in the rebel siege has killed more than 1,000 civilians since early June. Combat has cut off the port and the main water plant, leaving the city desperately short of food and clean water and plagued with cholera.

849 dead in floods

PATNA, India — Incessant monsoon rains swelled rivers and flooded more villages across South Asia on Friday, raising the death toll to 849 in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.

More than 12 million people are homeless or stranded, according to government estimates.

Landslides, lightning strikes, overflowing rivers, waterborne diseases, falling trees and collapsing roofs — constant features of the monsoon season in South Asia — have killed 333 people in India, 202 in Pakistan, 181 in Bangladesh and 133 in Nepal.

Authorities in India's eastern Bihar state sounded an alert Friday after floods worsened in six districts due to fresh rains.

Officials began evacuating residents of low-lying areas.

Schools and district government offices have been converted into temporary shelters for thousands of people who have fled their homes, in danger of being submerged.

The Associated Press

Bond set for hoax

TOPEKA, Kan. — A woman accused of perpetrating a cruel hoax on an Indiana couple, claiming to be their long-lost daughter, was ordered held on \$100,000 bond Friday.

A Kansas judge called Donna Lynette Walker a flight risk, noting at least one previous conviction for creating a false alarm and her past psychiatric care, including three visits this year to the state mental hospital.

Walker, clad in a dark blue jumpsuit and shackled at the arms and legs, sat silently in the courtroom as her lawyer spoke on her behalf. She is charged with identity deception and false reporting for committing what police called a "cruel hoax."

Walker said Thursday that she was only trying to assist in the search for Shannon Marie Sherrill, who disappeared 17 years ago near the family's home outside Indianapolis.

The Associated Press

N. Korea makes concession to U.S.

The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The United States achieved a key diplomatic goal when North Korea eased its insistence on one-on-one talks with Washington and agreed Friday to join U.S.-proposed multilateral talks, where it will find little sympathy for its suspected nuclear weapons programs.

North Korea attached a condition that private meetings between U.S. and North Korean officials be held during the proposed six-nation talks. That indicates the isolated country may try to elicit U.S. concessions, while stalling talks involving the other countries.

The impoverished nation wants a nonaggression treaty with the United States and has in the past sought to leverage aid from Washington. U.S. officials have ruled out a

nonaggression treaty, but said they could consider less formal security guarantees for the isolated state once multilateral talks begin.

Still, North Korea has insisted for months on bilateral talks with Washington and its willingness to accept the American proposal of a broader discussion involving the two Koreas, the United States, China, Japan and Russia was seen as a concession.

North Korea has insisted the nuclear issue is essentially a bilateral matter with the United States, while Washington considers it a regional concern.

U.S. officials believe North Korea already may possess one or two nuclear bombs and has plans to build more.

The current nuclear standoff began in October when North Korea acknowledged to U.S. officials it had a urani-

um-based nuclear weapons program. North Korea has withdrawn from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, restarted a plutonium-producing nuclear reactor and told U.S. officials it had reprocessed 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods.

The last procedure, experts say, could yield enough plutonium to make several nuclear bombs within months. U.S. officials have not been able to confirm that claim.

U.S. Undersecretary of State John Boston, on a trip to Japan, Friday said Washington's goal remains the "complete, verifiable and irreversible" dismantling of the communist regime's nuclear programs.

White House spokesman Scott McAllen said Friday the United States had not yielded to North Korean suggestions for direct U.S.-North Korean talks.

Giants get Ponson; Yanks, Red Sox make deals before trade deadline

BY BEN WALKER

The Associated Press

Gabe White was in the Cincinnati clubhouse when he heard the news. He'd become the latest Reds player to be traded, and he, too, was headed to the New York Yankees.

"This is an opportunity to go to the greatest team ever," the reliever said. "If you ask anybody who they'd like to play for, they'd tell you the Yankees. It's unbelievable."

The Yankees also got All-Star third baseman Aaron Boone from the Reds on Thursday, prompting the AL East leaders to trade third baseman Robin Ventura to Los Angeles.

While the Yankees and Boston Red Sox escalated their arms race with a flurry of trades, the San Francisco Giants made the biggest deal of the day in getting Baltimore ace Sidney Ponson.

"It's one of the tougher ones I've had to do because I like Sidney a lot," said Baltimore manager Mike Hargrove, who told Ponson of the move.

"I've got a job to do, and that's part of it. I've got a special feeling for Sidney, and I will in 20 years — unless he blows up my house or something," he kidded.

In all, there were six trades before baseball's 4 p.m. EDT deadline for deals without waivers. From now on, it becomes more tricky to make trades before the Aug. 31 deadline to be eligible for postseason play.

The Red Sox got pitcher Jeff Suppan from Pittsburgh and AL Central-leading Kansas City got Tampa Bay's best reliever, Al Levine.

The Giants made a bold move, giving up pitcher Damian Moss, righty prospect Kurt Ainsworth and minor league lefty Ryan Hannaman for Ponson, who was 14-6 with a 3.77 ERA for Baltimore this season.

He was one victory behind AL wins leader Roy Halladay of Toronto.

Ponson goes from a team struggling to reach .500 to a club with a 12-game lead in the NL West.

"Hopefully, I'll be in the World Series with them this year," Ponson said.

Ponson turned down a \$15 million, three-year contract extension from the Orioles on July 19 and the sides had continued to talk without reaching an agreement. He is eligible for free agency this winter.

"It wasn't a surprise I was getting traded," Ponson said.

"The Giants are a really good baseball team. I'm looking forward to meeting these guys, and I'm going to do everything in my power to help my new team win it all."

The Yankees made a pair of trades with the Reds. They got Boone, whose father was fired three days earlier as Cincinnati's manager, for promising left-hander Brandon Claussen and \$1 million.

Boone expects to join the Yankees for their game Friday night at Oakland. There had been rumors he might get traded to Seattle — where brother Bret plays — or the Dodgers.

"The fact that it's the Yankees is awesome," he said.

Boone, 30, was hitting .273 with 18 home runs and a team-high 65 RBIs this season. He also led the Reds with 15 stolen bases.

After getting Boone, the Yankees sent Ventura to Los Angeles for out-

fielder Bubba Crosby and right-handed pitcher Scott Proctor.

New York got White for a player to be named. He was 3-0 with 3.93 ERA in 34 relief appearances, and has been on the disabled list since June 25 because of a strained left groin. The Yankees hope to have him back in three weeks.

"That's the thing about this organization. No matter how good you're playing, you're always trying to get better," Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter said. "We want to improve. Not every team can say that."

Cincinnati fired manager Bob Boone and general manager Jim Bowden on Monday. Since then, the Reds traded closer Scott Williamson to Boston and productive outfielder Jose Guillen to Oakland.

"They've had a change of direction," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "All of baseball reacted to that. When the Reds' situation changed, it created a whole new market."

While the first-place Yankees have recently added relievers Armando Benitez, Jesse Orosco and White, the Red Sox have traded for pitchers Byung-Hyun Kim, Scott Sauerbeck, Williamson and Suppan.

In a reworking of a July 22 trade, Pittsburgh sent Suppan, right-hander Brandon Lyon and minor league pitcher Anatasio Martinez to Boston for infield prospect Freddy Sanchez, minor league left-hander Mike Gonzalez and cash.

Suppan spent most of his career in the AL before signing with Pittsburgh, going 48-57 with the Red Sox and Royals. He is 10-7 with a 3.57 ERA this season, with three complete games and two shutouts during his current five-game winning streak.

Scores/standings

American League

EAST DIVISION				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	65	40	.619	—
Boston	63	43	.594	2½
Toronto	54	53	.505	12
Baltimore	50	54	.481	14½
Tampa Bay	39	66	.371	26
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Kansas City	57	48	.543	—
Chicago	56	51	.523	2
Minnesota	52	54	.491	5½
Cleveland	45	62	.421	13
Detroit	28	77	.267	29
WEST DIVISION				
Seattle	65	42	.607	—
Oakland	61	46	.570	4
Anaheim	52	54	.491	12½
Texas	44	63	.411	21

National League

EAST DIVISION				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	70	37	.654	—
Philadelphia	59	47	.557	10½
Florida	59	49	.546	11½
Montreal	54	54	.500	16½
New York	44	63	.411	26
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Houston	58	49	.542	—
St. Louis	56	51	.523	2
Chicago	53	53	.500	4½
Pittsburgh	49	56	.467	8
Cincinnati	48	59	.449	10
Milwaukee	43	64	.402	15
WEST DIVISION				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	68	39	.636	—
Arizona	56	52	.519	12½
Colorado	56	54	.509	13½
Los Angeles	54	52	.509	13½
San Diego	41	67	.380	27½

From The Associated Press

A's 3, Indians 1

OAKLAND, Calif. — When Rich Harden retired the side on four pitches in the first inning, the fans behind the Oakland Athletics' dugout rose and cheered. By the seventh, the entire Coliseum was roaring with every out.

Harden struck out nine in seven scoreless innings, leading the A's to a 3-1 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Thursday.

Harden (2-0) allowed three hits and four walks while carving up the Indians' lineup — and striking out eight of nine hitters at one point. Miguel Tejada had a two-run single and Eric Chavez homered for the A's, who won for the eighth time in 11 games.

Yankees 2, Angels 1 (10)

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Nick Johnson's RBI single with two outs drove in the

go-ahead run as the Yankees completed their first three-game sweep of Anaheim in eight years.

Bernie Williams and Hideki Matsui drew one-out walks off Troy Percival (0-3) before Jorge Posada hit a fly to left. Johnson then lined a 2-1 fastball to left-center to drive in Williams.

Rangers 7, Red Sox 3 (11)

ARLINGTON, Texas — Alex Rodriguez hit his 10th career grand slam with two outs in the 11th off Todd Jones (2-1).

Texas took a 3-2 lead into the ninth, but Trot Nixon led off with his 20th homer against closer Francisco Cordero.

Twins 10, Orioles 9 (10)

MINNEAPOLIS — Minnesota scored the tying run from second base on what appeared to be a game-ending

strikeout, then won in the bottom of the 10th on Jacques Jones' single.

Minnesota trailed 9-8 with runners at first and second and two out in the ninth when Michael Restovich struck out. But catcher Brook Fordyce couldn't handle the pitch, which rolled to the backstop.

Restovich hesitated before running to first base, and Fordyce had time to throw him out, but the throw bounced in front of first baseman Jeff Conine, who couldn't handle it. Restovich reached base and Doug Mientkiewicz, who began the play at second, raced in with the tying run.

Devil Rays 7, Blue Jays 6

TORONTO — Damian Rolls homered and had three RBIs as Tampa Bay completed a three-game sweep.

Rolls went 3-for-4 for the Devil Rays, who went 14-12 in July for their first winning month since June 2000 (15-11).

Mariners 4, Tigers 0

SEATTLE — Joel Pineiro won his eighth consecutive decision, and Mike Cameron homered to lead Seattle to a three-game sweep.

Seattle pitched its major league-leading 13th shutout of the season. The Tigers were blanked for the 12th time, also the most in the majors.

White Sox 8, Royals 6 (11)

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Pinch-hitter Sandy Alomar had a tiebreaking two-run double in the 11th inning as the White Sox completed a three-game sweep that brought them within a game of the first-place Royals.

After his double off Graeme Lloyd, Alomar scored on a single by his brother, Roberto Alomar.

From The Associated Press

Cubs 9, Giants 4

CHICAGO — Add Carlos Zambrano's name to a growing list of Cubs pitchers to annoy Barry Bonds. The Chicago right-hander got Bonds out on a soft liner with the bases loaded and two outs in a 9-4 win Thursday — then might have gotten himself in some trouble with a celebration that was hard to miss.

After Bonds lined out to Zambrano to end the fifth, the 22-year-old pitcher pounded himself in the chest, pumped his fists twice and stalked off the field before flipping the ball deep into the stands behind the Cubs dugout.

The excitable Zambrano said he wasn't trying to disrespect Bonds.

Padres 10, Pirates 7

PITTSBURGH — Gary Matthews Jr. homered and Mark Loretta drove in three runs during a four-hit day as San Diego overcame three Pittsburgh homers.

San Diego rallied from three runs down to open an 8-4 lead on Matthews' two-run homer, then withstood consecutive homers by Jose Hernandez and Craig Wilson off Adam Easton to open the Pirates' sixth.

Brewers 4, Mets 3

NEW YORK — Matt Kinney (7-8) allowed one run and four hits in six-plus innings to win for the first time since June 27.

Scott Podsednik and Eddie Perez hit

RBI singles for the Brewers, who took three of four in the series between last-place teams. The punchless Mets have lost five of six and 17 of 22.

Expos 3, Cardinals 2

MONTREAL — Vladimir Guerrero homered and drove in all three runs, moving past Gary Carter into second place on Montreal's career homer list with 221, four behind Andre Dawson.

Braves 7, Astros 4

ATLANTA — Javy Lopez hit his 30th homer, a three-run shot that finished off a six-run first in the game between division leaders.

Shane Reynolds (9-5) allowed four runs and six hits in seven innings.

Phillies 7, Dodgers 3

PHILADELPHIA — Tomas Perez and Placido Polanco hit three-run homers in the fifth as Philadelphia completed a three-game sweep.

The Dodgers have scored eight runs in their last seven games, going 3-4 in that span. They had gone seven games in a row without scoring more than two runs.

Reds 5, Rockies 4

CINCINNATI — Jason LaRue homered off Brian Fuentes (2-1) leading off the 10th. Cincinnati has gone 2-1 this week while trading four players to save money and get prospects.

From The Associated Press